

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/603,998

Examiner

Martin Lerner

Applicant(s)

BENNETT, IAN M.

Art Unit

2626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Response to Election/Restriction Requirement filed 13 November 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 26 to 37.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An Examiner's Amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to Applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel claims 38 to 44.

2. This application is in condition for allowance except for the presence of claims 38 to 44 directed to inventions non-elected without traverse. Accordingly, claims 38 to 44 have been cancelled.

EXAMINER'S STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claim 26 is allowable because the prior art of record does not disclose or reasonably suggest a combination of providing a target set of questions associated with a task domain, determining a synonym for selected words of a user question from the target set of questions, and storing a set of disambiguated questions in a speech recognition lattice. *Simke et al.* discloses generating a list of synonymic queries from a user-input query. *Gupta et al.* teaches a voice-enabled help desk

service, where a question and answer (QA) table, or "target set of questions associated with a content of a task domain", is stored for a plurality of classified call types "C".

(Column 7, Lines 18 to 32; Column 13, Lines 43 to 50) However, the prior art of record

does not disclose or reasonably suggest the additional feature of storing a set of

disambiguated questions corresponding to semantic variants in a speech recognition

lattice from the target set of questions and a synonym set of questions. *Wolf et al.*

('001) teaches storing a spoken query as a lattice for speech recognition, generally, but

does not store disambiguated questions based on a set of synonym of questions

produced by replacing words in a user question with synonyms. Thus, Applicant's

invention stores a speech recognition lattice from a set of synonyms derived from a user

question, whereas *Simke et al.* and *Gupta et al.* only produce synonyms for a given user

question without storing the user question and its synonyms in a speech recognition

lattice. The objective is to automatically populate a speech recognition lattice with

semantic variants of a user's question in a task domain. (Specification, Page 63, Lines

5 to 32)

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Martin Lerner whose telephone number is (571) 272-

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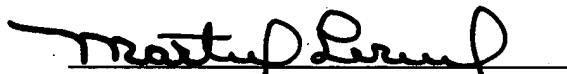
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7608. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM Monday to Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David R. Hudspeth can be reached on (571) 272-7843. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

ML
12/17/07


Martin Lerner
Examiner
Group Art Unit 2626